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ABSTRACT

A reciprocating barrier assembly provides a barrier on a handling side of an elevated loading platform when articles are being loaded onto the platform, through a load-in side of the platform, and provides a barrier on the load-in side of the elevated platform when articles are being removed from the loading platform through the handling side of the platform by workers. The barrier assembly includes a pair of parallel guide rails, each shaped generally as an inverted U, and having a first substantially vertical portion, a second substantially vertical portion opposite the first substantially vertical portion and a substantially horizontal portion interconnecting the first and second substantially vertical portions; a first gate segment having at least one pair of rollers positioned on opposite lateral sides thereof, where each roller is received within a respective one of the guide rails so that the first gate segment is guided by the pair of guide rails; a second gate segment having at least one pair of rollers positioned on opposite lateral sides thereof, where each roller is received within a respective one of the guide rails so that the second gate segment is guided by the pair of guide rails; and at least one substantially rigid cross-bar pivotally connected between the first and second gate segments. The first gate segment is guided by the pair of guide rails from a first barrier position in which the first gate segment is positioned entirely within the first substantially vertical portions of the pair of guide rails to an open position in which the first gate segment is positioned at least partially in the substantially horizontal portion of the pair of guide rails. The second gate segment is guided by the pair of guide rails from a second barrier position in which the second gate segment is positioned entirely within the second substantially vertical portions of the pair of guide rails to an open position in which the second gate segment is positioned at least partially in the substantially horizontal portion of the pair of guide rails. Finally, the cross-bar has a length which requires that when the first gate segment is in its barrier position the second gate segment will be in its open position, and vice-versa. Therefore, because this cross-bar is substantially rigid, it will

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